

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PAPANDREOU ATTACKS GOVT'S PERFORMANCE AT BRUSSELS
NATO SUMMIT

1. SUMMARY. IN A PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED JUN 1 ANDREAS PAPANDREOU STRONGLY CASTIGATED GREEK PARTICIPATION AT THE RECENT BRUSSELS NATO SUMMIT MEETING ON THE GROUND THAT THE GOG IS COVERTLY LEADING GREECE BACK INTO THE NATO FOLD AND THEREBY UNDERMINING THE ATTEMPT TO INTERNATIONALIZE THE CYPRUS SETTLEMENT. A GOG SPOKESMAN COUNTERED THE SAME DAY THAT PAPANDREOU'S STATEMENT BOTH "IGNORED THE TRUTH AND LACKED ANY SERIOUSNESS". PAPANDREOU'S ATTACK IS IN CONTRAST TO OTHER GREEK OPPOSITION POLITICIANS WHO HAVE EITHER ENDORSED CARAMANLIS DIPLOMACY AT BRUSSELS OR PREFERRED TO SAY NOTHING, AND SHARPLY CONFLICTS WITH THE TONE OF ALL GREEK DAILIES EXCEPT ONE WHICH HAVE PUT THE BEST POSSIBLE FACE ON THE CARAMANLIS/DEMIREL CONTACTS IN THE NATO CONTEXT. ONLY ATHINAIKI, WHICH SEMI-OFFICIALLY SUPPORTS PAPANDREOU AND PASOK, COMMENTED FAVORABLY ON HIS ARGUMENTS; CONSERVATIVE VRADYNI COMMENTED THAT THE PASOK LEADER HAD FURTHER ISOLATED HIMSELF

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FROM THE POLITICAL MAINSTREAM. END SUMMARY.

2. IN HIS JUN 1 RELEASE, WHICH WAS REPORTED IN ATHINAIKI JUN 2 AND ALL OTHER DAILIES JUN 3, PAPANDREOU CHARGED THAT "AFTER OSCILLATIONS AND HESITANT STEPS IN THE DIRECTION OF AN INDEPENDENT FOREIGN POLICY, THE PRIME MINISTER BROUGHT GREECE BACK INTO THE NATO FAMILY AND ENTRUSTED THE PROTECTION OF OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS TO THOSE WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SEVEN YEAR OCCUPATION AND THE SLAUGHTER OF CYPRUS AS WELL."

3. PAPANDREOU WENT ON TO LIST FIVE BASIC CRITICISMS OF THE GOG DECISION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE NATO MEETING AT BRUSSELS: (1) ACCEPTANCE OF THE NATO FRAMEWORK FOR NEGOTIATING CYPRUS AND AEGEAN PROBLEMS LEADS NECESSARILY TO LOSS OF SUPPORT FOR GREECE IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL AREAS, AND ISOLATES GREECE FROM COUNTRIES WHICH DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN NATO, THUS UNDERMINING GREECE'S NEGOTIATING POWER; (2) A DEFINITE SHIFT TO BILATERAL GREECE/TURKEY NEGOTIATIONS WITHIN THE NATO CONTEXT DENIES CYPRIOT PARTICIPATION AND REVEALS THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS TO BE A SMOKESCREEN FOR ANKARA/ATHENS DIALOGUE; (3) TURKEY'S ACCEPTANCE OF HAGUE TRIBUNAL MEDIATION OVER THE AEGEAN DISPUTE, AND THE GOG TRUMPETING OF THIS, UNDERSCORE THAT GREECE HAS ERRED IN RECOGNIZING TURKISH RIGHTS IN THE AEGEAN EVEN THOUGH OF AN UNDETERMINED NATURE; (4) THE GREEK POSITION HAS ALLOWED TURKEY TO MAKE POINTS TOWARD RETAINING RENEWAL OF US AID WHICH WILL WORSEN THE BALANCE OF POWER IN THE AEGEAN (AGAINST GREECE) THUS FURTHERING THE PRIME AIM OF SECRETARY KISSINGER; (5) THE GREEK WITHDRAWAL FROM NATO HAS NEVER MATERIALIZED AND IS NOW REVEALED AS A MERE PLOY.

14. GOG JUN 2 ISSUED A TERSE REBUTTAL, ATTRIBUTED TO "COMPETENT SOURCE," THAT "MR PAPANDREOU IGNORED NOT ONLY TRUTH BUT ALSO THE LIMITS OF EXERCISING CRITICISM ON NATIONAL ISSUES. IT WOULD NOT, THEREFORE, BE SERIOUS TO ATTEMPT TO GO OVER A LINE OF ARGUMENT WHICH, TO SAY THE LEAST, LACKED SERIOUSNESS." IN RELATED BUT OPPOSITE DEVELOPMENTS, FORMER PREMIERS NOVAS AND STEFANOPOULOS PRAISED THE CARAMANLIS MISSION TO BRUSSELS FOR HAVING LESSENED THE THREAT OF WAR. GEORGE MAVROS, THE OPPOSITION LEADER WHOM CARAMANLIS HAS PERSONALLY BRIEFED SINCE HIS RETURN FROM BRUSSELS, HAS SO FAR SAID NOTHING. PRIOR TO BRUSSELS MEETING, MAVROS STATED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT THE OPPOSITION BACKED THE NATIONAL POLICY.

5. ALTHOUGH MOST DAILIES PROMINENTLY REPORTED PAPANDREOU'S STATEMENT, THE ONLY PAPER TO DO SO WITH FAVORABLE COMMENT WAS ATHINAIKI, HIS TRADITIONAL APOLOGIST, WHICH ENDORSED HIS ANALYSIS. IN ANOTHER COMMENT, VRADYNI SAID THA PAPANDREOU'S STATEMENT INDICATED HE HAD NOT EVEN READ COMMUNIQUE FROM BRUSSELS, AND THAT THE FAILURE OF PRESS TO COMMENT ON HIS

IRRESPONSIBLE STATEMENT SUGGESTED HE OCCUPIED AN ISOLATED POSITION.

6. COMMENT: ONE OR TWO OF PAPANDREOUS CRITICISMS MAY STRIKE HOME WITH SOME GREEKS; FOR EXAMPLE, ONLY HE HAS FOCUSED ON THE PM'S RATHER ABRUPT CHANGE IN TONE FROM EARLIER CRITICISM OF NATO TO HIS PRESENT QUALIFIED BUT DISTINCTLY FRIENDLY ATTITUDE WITH ITS SUGGESTION OF A POSSIBLE RETURN TO FULL NATO MEMBERSHIP IN THE FUTURE. OTHER OF PAPANDREOU'S COMMENTS ARE WILDLY OFF BASE AS, FOR EXAMPLE, HIS ATTACK ON THE DECISION TO GO TO THE HAGUE, WHICH WAS MADE IN PRINCIPLE BY BOTH GOVTS SOME MONTHS EARLIER WITHOUT, AT THE TIME, RECEIVING ANY CRITICISM FROM PAPANDREOU OR ANY OTHER GREEK POLITICAL FIGURE. THE DEARTH OF EDITORIAL COMMENT IN SUPPORT OF PAPANDREOU'S ARGUMENTS AND HIS RASPY TONE CONTRASTS WITH THE GREEK PRESS WHICH HAS VIEWED BRUSSELS AS A DRAMATIC, INTIAL DEFUSING OF THE GREEK/TURKISH CRISIS. PAPANDREOU MAY HAVE BEEN WILLING TO RISK, OR DELIBERATELY SOUGHT TO STRIKE, A DISCORDANT NOTE IN ORDER TO REAFFIRM HIS OLD ARGUMENT IN SUPPORT OF INTERNATIONAL, VIZ. COMMUNIST, INVOLVEMENT IN THE CYPRUS NEGOTIATIONS AND/OR BECAUSE HE FEARS CARAMANLIS HAS BEGUN A FINESSE OF THE ENTIRE POLITICAL ISSUE OF GREEK MEMBERSHIP IN NATO. THE ARGUMENTS HE CHOSE TO EMPHASIZE, AS HIS POLITICAL POSTURE AT THIS TIME, SEEM ON THE ONE HAND OVERLY ACADEMIC AND ON THE OTHER OVERLY CONTENTIOUS. THEY ARE PROBABLY OUT OF TUNE WITH THE GREEK PUBLIC WHICH WANTSTO SEE PROGRESS, NOT HARANGUES, IN PUTTING CYPRUS AND THE DISPUTE OVER THE AEGEAN IN A LESS ANXIETY PROMOTING CONTEXT THAN THE NATION HAS EXPERIENCED IN RECENT MONTHS.

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